



LAKE TAHOE  
VISITORS AUTHORITY  
**Step into the Blue™**

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**GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER AT LAKE TAHOE:**

**“SAFE TO COME HERE – ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PLACES IN THE ENTIRE  
WORLD”**

***Extensive Local Recovery Effort Underway***

***Highway 50 Open to Visitors in Both Directions; Clear Blue Skies for July 4<sup>th</sup> Holiday***

(*South Lake Tahoe, Calif.*) – Demonstrating the resiliency, neighborly concern and determination reflective of a small, tight-knit mountain community, South Lake Tahoe has been moving forward to help locals who have suffered losses in the Angora Fire, which fire officials expect to be fully contained by Tuesday, July 3.

Rich Hawkins - Chief Incident Commander, “There should be no problem for Lake Tahoe businesses over 4th of July. The fire is currently 70% contained, with flames extinguished. With yesterday’s lighter winds, crews continued to make excellent progress on building and strengthening fire lines, maintaining structure protection and working into the fire perimeter to cool hot spots.

Residents of Lake Tahoe, one of the country’s most popular destination resorts, were further bolstered by a progressive day on the fire front Wednesday and optimistic comments at an area press conference from California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who said, “Right now it is safe to come to Lake Tahoe and I hope people and families will enjoy their weekend here because it is one of the most beautiful areas in the entire world.” For press conference video and notes, visit: [Governor Invites Families to Tahoe](#)

Local lodging properties, casinos, restaurants, ski resorts and businesses – small and large, have been providing free rooms and meals for fire victims. “Everyone who has been impacted will have a roof over their head and food to eat,” said Mike Bradford, President of Lakeside Inn & Casino and member of the Lake Tahoe Gaming Alliance.

“Local businesses immediately jumped in to do whatever they could,” said Bradford. “From Heavenly providing its California Base Lodge as fire command center to Tahoe Daily Tribune providing a drop center for food and clothing to KRLT radio’s timely information to Harrah’s and Harveys Casinos, The Chateau at Heavenly Village, Cedar Room, Nepheles, Red Hut restaurants, and so many other businesses offering food for the emergency crews, the outpouring of help has been tremendous. And our attention will continue with long term assistance.”

David Hoffman, a San Jose, Calif. real estate attorney on vacation with his wife, Debby, at South Shore, commented, “I’ve never seen such a spirit of cooperation. This town has really pulled together to help each other.” Commenting on the effects of the fire, Hoffman said, “We’ve always felt safe since the fire was miles from the center of town. Now that the flames are out and the skies have cleared, we can enjoy the Lake activities.”

While the fire threat still exists with smoldering in the stricken residential rural area 6 miles west of the state line area, officials are cautiously optimistic and hopeful that predicted afternoon winds today dissipate like yesterday.

Leaders of the Lake Tahoe South Shore Chamber of Commerce, which represents business on both sides of the California/Nevada state line, have established the “Locals For Locals” Angora Fire Fund to accept donations to help victims in the outlying residential area who’ve been affected. Many of the larger businesses have already made funding commitments including the Casinos, Vail Resorts, Aramark, Raley’s Supermarkets and the NBC Sports’ American Century Championship, the celebrity golf tournament.

Donations are welcome from any source: individuals, businesses – small companies or large corporations, from in or outside the area. To make a donation, please mail to “Locals For Locals Angora Fire Fund”, U.S. Bank, P.O. Box 17640, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96151, attn: Jenny Domingo, or call 530-542-1801. Discussion is also underway among South Shore’s casinos regarding major fundraisers involving celebrity concerts, performances and other events.

Many area businesses are also setting up additional fundraising efforts to support people who have lost their homes including Sierra-at-Tahoe and Kirkwood Mountain Resort.

“We all have friends and neighbors who’ve suffered losses. And because it’s a small town, we’re all affected,” said Carl Ribaud, Chairman of the Chamber Board. “There’s no way to describe the heartbreak of those who’ve lost their homes – it’s devastating. And while the firefighters complete their job, we need to help our friends with assistance and that assistance is ensuring the economy does not suffer and further impact the local community.”

“Locals are the fabric of this town – it’s what makes Tahoe a great place to visit and we need to take care of them,” stated Ribaud. “We also need to be prepared to take care of the thousands of visitors we’ll have here next week in the way they’re accustomed.”

The fire that jumped the line Tuesday was immediately contained around a forested residential neighborhood. Thanks to the inspired and cooperative efforts of some 1,900 firefighters it has not spread to more neighborhoods or areas frequented by visitors to the area.

The Fourth of July, one of the area's traditionally most popular periods next week, raises hopes that visitors will resume their love affair with one of the country's most spectacular natural wonders. Just two days following the outbreak of the Angora Fire, safety issues throughout the area have been restored; U.S. Highway 50, the main artery from Northern California, is open with no restrictions; the air is clearing; and all tourism attractions including entertainment, dining and all outdoor and lake-related recreational activities are open and accessible.

The traditional Independence Day celebration will include "Lights on the Lake," the annual July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks extravaganza, which is rated one of the Top Five fireworks shows in the country. The fireworks are conducted from barges on the Lake assuring safety.

"Tourism officials were the first to question the appropriateness of holding an event in light of the Angora Fire," said Patrick Kaler, executive director of the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority. "The overwhelming feeling was it would serve to highlight the area's spirit and resiliency throughout the country, that Lake Tahoe recovery is underway."

The annual pyrotechnics spectacular attracts an estimated 100,000 spectators for an astounding show on the one of the world's most beautiful stages. The American Pyrotechnics Association determined the "must-see" ranking based on the quality, variety, choreography and volume of fireworks.

The rest of the summer line-up at South Shore includes celebrity golf with the 18<sup>th</sup> annual American Century Championship July 10-15 and the Harveys Outdoor concert series with Beyonce, Rascal Flatts and Toby Keith.

For more information about headliner entertainment, summer activities and lodging at South Shore Lake Tahoe, please visit [www.BlueLakeTahoe.com](http://www.BlueLakeTahoe.com).

For information about South Shore Lake Tahoe, call the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, 1-800-AT-TAHOE (1-800-288-2463) or log onto [www.BlueLakeTahoe.com](http://www.BlueLakeTahoe.com).

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